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My favorite Web sites and online tools

As you can probably imagine, I spend a lot of time online. Throughout my day, I find myself returning to the same Web sites over and over again. And, similarly, there are certain online tools that I use repeatedly.

It occurred to me that sharing my favorite Web sites and online tools might be useful to my readers. Although not all of these tools will be relevant to you, you may find a gem or two that will make your online life much simpler and more fulfilling.

Every morning I turn to three Web sites for information and news. First, I review the most popular news of the day at Yahoo News (<http://news.yahoo.com/most-popular>). The popular news is categorized in three ways: the “most e-mailed news,” the “most viewed news” and the “most recommended news.” Skimming over the news stories and headlines in each section gives me a good sense of what’s happening in the world and the interest level of certain events to other Internet users.

I then read through my RSS feeds using my RSS feed reader of choice, Feedly (www.feedly.com). Feedly pulls the feeds to blogs and other news sources that you subscribe to using Google Reader and presents them to you in a far more user-friendly interface. Feeds appear in a magazine-like view that is much easier on the eyes and sorting through new items is simple and intuitive.

Another benefit of Feedly is that it allows content to be shared quickly via e-mail, Twitter or on other social networking sites.

Next, I hit Trendalicious (www.glozer.net/trendy/), a Web site that offers a real-time ranking of the 100 most popular Web pages as reflected by the top pages trending on three Web sites that sort online content based upon user input: Delicious, digg and reddit. Trendalicious is a great way to get a feel for the topics and new technology products that the online community is focusing on at any given time.

As I peruse the blogs posts, news stories and Web sites that I discover using the above sources, I bookmark those that I find particularly interesting using Diigo (www.diigo.com), a Web-based bookmarking site. I prefer Web-based bookmarking sites



By **NICOLE BLACK**

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Columnist

to using the bookmark function of my browser because it is more streamlined and I can access my bookmarks from any computer.

Diigo is my preferred web-based bookmarking site for a number of reasons. First, Diigo automatically backs up any site that you bookmark to your “delicious” (www.delicious.com) account. Delicious is one of the most popular Web-based bookmarking services, and backing up your bookmarks to that database as well ensures that your information will not be lost on the off-chance that Diigo or Delicious should fail and lose all of your data.

Diigo also allows you to annotate web pages that interest you. You simply highlight the Web pages or add “sticky notes” using Diigo’s interface and save them to Diigo. The annotations will subsequently appear on the Web sites anytime you visit thereafter.

I also frequently use the “SimilarWeb” Firefox browser add-on (www.similarweb.com/) whenever I land on a Web site that interests me. This add-on provides me with links to: (1) similar Web sites; (2) related articles from news sites and blogs; and (3) the latest social media buzz about the Web site. It’s an invaluable tool that is a real time saver.

Finally, once I’ve caught up with the news of the day, I update my daily to-do list by visiting TeuxDeux (<http://teuxdeux.com>), a simple, intuitive, Web-based to-do application. I recently started using TeuxDeux and it is now my to-do list application of choice.

My next step is to get to work tackling the items on my to-do list. As I do so, I find myself constantly revisiting the Web sites and tools mentioned above throughout my day. Hopefully you’ll find that a few of these resources will become as invaluable to you as they are to me.

Nicole Black is of counsel to Fiandach and Fiandach and is the founder of lawtechTalk.com, which offers legal technology consulting services, and publishes four legal blogs, one of which is Practicing Law in the 21st Century (<http://21stcenturylaw.wordpress.com>). She may be reached at nblack@nicole-blackesq.com.